

for U.S. businesses and supported 7.4 million American jobs—including 152, 864 in my home state of Hawaii, and 873,000 in Congressman DREIER's home state of California.

This legislation will help to support and grow this important industry by making travel to the U.S. easier and more efficient for foreign travelers. Specifically, the bill contains several provisions aimed at increasing visitors from China, making visa processing more efficient, and giving the State Department necessary flexibility to manage the visa process more effectively.

It will also help to solidify and strengthen our relationship with one of our most important travel partners, Canada, and even includes provisions to help address the housing crisis.

China has the world's largest population—1.3 billion people—yet only 802,000 visitors travelled to the U.S. in 2010. These 802,000 visitors spent approximately \$5 billion in the U.S. during their stays, the seventh most spent in the U.S. by visitors from any country. Clearly, welcoming more visitors from China will benefit our economy and help to create jobs. In order to do this, the bill provides Chinese visitors that meet the appropriate security requirements with the ability to acquire five year, multiple-entry visitor visas.

The bill would also establish a pilot program that would allow the State Department to conduct visa interviews via videoconference. One of the key challenges for residents of these countries—like China, India, and Brazil—is the need to travel great distances to conduct in-person visa interviews. If successful, this pilot program will help to responsibly reduce wait times and effectively meet the demand for visas in countries with large rural populations.

The bill would also authorize the State Department to charge extra fees in order to expedite the processing of certain visas, and allow Customs and Border Protection to provide expedited visas for foreign dignitaries and other priority visitors. This can be especially important for international meetings, and events such as the Olympics. Finally, the VISIT Act will make changes to visa procedures for nation's that are working closely with the U.S. to combat terrorism.

The VISIT Act also allows the Administration to lower visa application fees during off-peak seasons to help incentivize applications when overall demand is low.

In addition to improving the visa processing system, and incentivizing travelers from untapped markets, the VISIT Act also includes provisions to encourage visitors from the U.S.'s top travel partner—Canada.

In 2010, the U.S. welcomed 20 million visitors from Canada. Those visitors spent over \$20 billion during their stays. The VISIT Act creates a "Canadian Retiree Visa" which allows Canadian citizens over 50 to apply for 240 day visas. These visas would need to be renewed every three years, and visa holders would have to meet all necessary security requirements, and be able to prove that they have accommodations for the duration of their stay.

Overall, the reforms included in this bill are a cost-effective, bipartisan approach to incentivizing job creation and supporting a critical U.S. industry. In fact, to date the Senate legislation has been endorsed by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the U.S. Travel Association, the American Hotel & Lodging Association, and the U.S. Olympic Committee.

I'm confident that there will be many other groups—from across the political spectrum—that will support these much needed reforms that Chairman DREIER and I are introducing today.

I look forward to working with all of my colleagues to see this measure passed.

RECOGNIZING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF JAMES M. REDMOND OF THE HOSPITAL AND HEALTHSYSTEM ASSOCIATION OF PENNSYLVANIA

HON. JIM GERLACH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 4, 2011

Mr. GERLACH. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of myself and members of the Pennsylvania delegation (Mr. BRADY, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. KELLY, Mr. ALTMIRE, Mr. THOMPSON, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. MARINO, Mr. BARLETTA, Mr. CRITZ, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. DOYLE, Mr. DENT, Mr. PITTS, Mr. HOLDEN, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. PLATTS), I would like the following statement submitted for the RECORD.

I rise today to recognize the many years of outstanding service by James M. Redmond of the Hospital and Healthsystem Association of Pennsylvania.

Mr. Redmond has worked for The Hospital & Healthsystem Association of Pennsylvania for 36 years, serving the last 20 years as the Senior Vice President for Legislative Services. During his tenure, he has used his extensive knowledge about, and expertise in, the state legislative process to achieve balance and compromise in resolving essential health care policy issues.

Mr. Redmond's successes as an advocate for hospitals and health systems have been attributable to his hard work, persistence, and steadfast commitment and adherence to integrity and ethics. He has been a key participant in numerous initiatives that strengthened Pennsylvania's hospitals and greatly improved patient care, including the development of Pennsylvania's trauma system.

Mr. Redmond began his career in health care administration at the Milton S. Hershey Medical Center of Pennsylvania State University. He is a graduate of the University of Connecticut, with a degree in pharmacy, and a graduate of the University of Florida with a Master of Business Administration. A Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Executives, Mr. Redmond is also the author of numerous articles and reports on health care policy, and he has served on several state and national advisory groups.

During his distinguished 36 years with the Association, Mr. Redmond has repeatedly proven himself to be one of the Commonwealth's most respected advocates and health care leaders and we, as the Commonwealth's delegation to the U.S. House of Representatives, wish him health and happiness in his retirement.

HONORING MAYOR BENNY
MCGUIRE

HON. STEPHEN LEE FINCHER

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 4, 2011

Mr. FINCHER. Mr. Speaker, great leaders govern with integrity, humility and with generosity to their community. In the Tennessee Eighth Congressional District, there is one leader whose efforts have been appreciated by his community and acknowledged by his peers. I rise today to congratulate the honorable Benny McGuire, as he begins his tenure of President over the Association of County Mayors of Tennessee.

A dedicated public servant, Mayor McGuire has not only contributed countless hours to Obion County, but he has set an example for other mayors to follow. Serving as the director of the Antioch Cemetery Association in Hornbeak, he also works as a chair of the Northwest Tennessee Development District and serves as a member on numerous local boards and committees. After only two terms as mayor of Obion County, he was selected by his peers to be named President of the Association of County Mayors of Tennessee, the statewide organization representing 95 county mayors and executives.

I value the great work and dedication that individuals like Mayor McGuire contribute to the West Tennessee area. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Mayor Benny McGuire as he extends his dedication and devotion to the people of Obion County as well as all of Tennessee.

HONORING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF ELKS LODGE #1243, IN CARBONDALE, ILLINOIS

HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 4, 2011

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the 100th anniversary of Elks Lodge #1243, in Carbondale, Illinois.

Carbondale Elks Lodge #1243 started with 81 charter members in 1911. The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks had begun just 43 years earlier in New York City. In these early years, those interested in starting a new lodge would petition an existing lodge for initiation. The list of names for the proposed Carbondale Lodge was sent to Murphysboro, Illinois Lodge #572 on May 10, 1911 and Carbondale Lodge #1243 was formed.

Through the years, Carbondale Elks Lodge #1243 has engaged in a number of programs to foster the Elks mission, "To promote and practice the four cardinal virtues of Charity, Justice, Brotherly Love and Fidelity; to promote the welfare and enhance the happiness of its members; to quicken the spirit of American Patriotism and cultivate good fellowship." Some current activities include organizing fund-raisers to benefit disabled and visually impaired children and holding an annual charity golf tournament.

Carbondale Elks Lodge #1243 has been a shining example of a fraternal organization

that strives not only to support its members but to provide resources and volunteer activities to benefit their greater community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the officers and members of Carbondale, Illinois Elks Lodge #1243 on their 100th anniversary and to wish them all the best for many years to come.

HONORING THE SERVICE OF SPC
ADRIAN GARCIA

HON. FRANCISCO "QUICO" CANSECO

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 4, 2011

Mr. CANSECO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Army SPC Adrian Garcia of El Paso, TX. SPC Garcia was only three weeks into his first deployment when he was attacked while on a routine patrol in Ramadi, Iraq in March 2007. SPC Garcia was manning the turret of an up-armored HUMMVEE when a Rocket Propelled Grenade attack shattered both of his legs. SPC Garcia's injuries were so severe that both of his legs required amputations above the knee, leaving him in a wheelchair.

On November 11, 2011, Homes for Our Troops will provide Army SPC Adrian Garcia with a brand new home at no cost. SPC Garcia's new home will be specially adapted to accommodate his needs, allowing him to be more productive and independent. The work of Homes for Our Troops and the community of El Paso, Texas, is a great example of the appreciation we should show our brave men and women who have served our nation in uniform.

I extend my personal thanks and sincere appreciation to SPC Garcia for his sacrifice made while protecting our freedom. We owe our veterans a huge amount of gratitude—particularly those who have been injured while serving their Nation. As President Calvin Coolidge said, "The nation which forgets its defenders will be itself forgotten."

RECOGNIZING THE COMMENDABLE
SUPPORT EFFORTS OF CLEAR
CHANNEL COMMUNICATIONS,
INC.

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 4, 2011

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the commendable efforts of Clear Channel Communications Inc. in their support of diversity and small businesses within the radio broadcasting industry. For a long time, public broadcasting, especially in the area of radio, excluded or carried heavy restrictions on the voices coming from minorities and women of this country. These binding practices limited the freedom of expression for minorities and women in broadcasting and provided a frail platform upon which to deliver meaningful public affairs and news within these communities.

Radio broadcasting in past decades has experienced dramatic, positive change with the cultivation of environments which support mi-

norities and women's matriculation from their traditional auxiliary support positions, such as disk jockeys or custodial workers, into more influential roles such as managers, engineers, and program directors. The change also removed barriers which once denied favorable circumstances for members of these populations to gain ownership and syndication. This shift has allowed for a broad array of broadcast opportunities to include more autonomy in the presentation of public affairs discussions, music, and information which more specifically reflects the culture and interest of the minority and female listening audiences.

Technological advancements and a growing social affinity for more digital interface have placed pressure on the radio industry to maintain its standing among other broadcasting mediums. This strain, coupled with the nation's financial tensions, has made staying up to speed with the changing times all the more difficult. However, impressively, the radio world continues to provide phenomenal listening programs to the masses. This tenacity has been seen in no place greater than within the minority and women sectors.

Clear Channel recognizes the impact minority and women broadcasters have had on broadcasting and has taken a laudable position to make investments to ensure their productive futures. Their plan to divest 448 radio stations in 88 markets, which lead to the donation of six stations to the Minority Media and Telecommunications Council, MMTC, shows that Clear Channel has a keen awareness of the value diversity plays in broadcasting and shows that they have a sound understanding of the needs of small, local radio stations. Clear Channel's efforts to enhance the infrastructure for these individuals and business owners will aid in their abilities to boost their hiring capabilities, expand their listening audiences, increase advertisement revenues and support their communities by delivering excellent content.

Mississippi was one of the states privileged to be a part of this gesture of good faith with the acquisition of WHJA (AM) in Laurel, Mississippi. James Hardman, a minority broadcaster from Tulsa, Oklahoma, with decades of experience, plans to put WHJA back on the air under a local marketing agreement (LMA) with MMTC. Hardman intends to produce high quality and innovative programs focused on the African-American community while encompassing the cultural differences across the State of Mississippi. Economic and political empowerment in the African-American community has been difficult to achieve without access and control of the mass media resources that impact our communities. Clear Channel's dedication to assist with gains in this area creates opportunities for success for African-Americans in Mississippi.

Mister Speaker, I ask you and my fellow colleagues to join me in recognizing the meritorious efforts put forth by Clear Channel Inc. towards ensuring the viability of the minority and women communities within the radio broadcasting industry.

THE GREATEST GENERATION

HON. MICK MULVANEY

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 4, 2011

Mr. MULVANEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the men and women of the Greatest Generation, as well as to welcome those who will soon be making the trip from their homes in South Carolina to our Nation's Capital.

Seventy years ago, their lives were interrupted by providence. By their selfless action, these ordinary men and woman became extraordinary.

They defended their country and their families. They protected the innocent and freed the captive.

They served freely and without reservation, in what was to become the deadliest conflict in human history.

Too often, Americans are reminded that freedom comes with a heavy burden. Thankfully, their generation understood this, and met the challenge bravely.

That is why there are no words that can express our gratitude, no medals or monuments sufficient to symbolize just how much we owe to them.

But the world we live in today, the freedoms we enjoy, the blessings we count, are all because of them.

That is why we continue to honor them.

And to remember.

RECOGNIZING THE ALAMEDA
COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN
AND FAMILY SERVICE

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 4, 2011

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Alameda County Social Services Agency, Department of Children and Family Services. Due to their exemplary work to open more good homes to foster children by actively recruiting and working with LGBT families, they have earned the All Children-All Families Seal of Recognition from the Human Rights Campaign Foundation, a leading organization in the advocacy of LGBT civil rights.

Alameda is only the second county in the nation to receive this recognition. By eliminating the barriers that LGBT couples and individuals face when they chose to adopt or foster, Alameda County has helped to fulfill their mission of ensuring that every foster child finds a loving family. One example of how important Alameda County's work has been in this area is Lara and Emkay Bosque. Lara and Emkay have adopted two young children. Thanks to their efforts, two beautiful children are growing up in a permanent and loving family, instead of the foster care system. We need more families like the Bosques and I will be displaying their family photo in my office during November, which is National Adoption Month.

At this time of celebration for Alameda County it is important to remember that they are a shining example of what counties and agencies across the nation can do to decrease the number of children in our foster